

25 January 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

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FROM: [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: DCI Task Force on Declassification of  
Photoreconnaissance Imagery - Options Paper

1. On 25 January 1979, members of the DCI Task Force on Declassification of Photoreconnaissance Imagery met at Intelligence Community Headquarters to discuss the first draft of an Options Paper to be submitted to the Policy Review Committee (Space).

2. The opinions being expressed at the table varied from non-agreement with the options as drawn, to complete support. The battle lines were drawn generally on the side of "not enough disclosure" (as voiced by Civil Agencies represented) and "this is more than we bargained for in the first place."

3. The group was reminded by [REDACTED] (Task Force Chairman) that their charter extended only to coming up with a paper offering plausible options and not to go beyond that into other arenas. Objections were voiced not only to the number and types of options (cf. paper attached) but to the format, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Opponents indicated their feeling of being "used" by the Task Force if they agreed to the conclusions as written. Interior and AID especially were vocal in their non-agreement with the options as written. Interior (Dr. Gordon Law) said he personally disagreed stating: "They are not right options...we ain't about to be used." Dr. Chuck Paul from AID made the observation that "we're in the same place we were 10 years ago." His beef rested with the lack of available mapping data on foreign countries (primarily Africa) which desperately needed updating in his opinion. Interior seemed to be very upset with the fact that several congressional inquiries [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] focused on mineral and oil rights in Alaska and no decent maps were available to offset challenges

and presumed future litigation generated by landowners because of their dissatisfaction with government confiscation of their lands.

4. While these arguments caught the ears of Task Force members and a revision of the report and its options may well occur, little substantive compassion appeared to flow from the folks who represented the Intelligence side of the table. Perhaps the most significant feature of the latter part of the session was [ ] calling on [ ] to comment on the purpose of the Task Force as he understood it. [ ]

[ ] he reminded the gathered assembly that the task force was created as a result of somewhat casual conversation in September 1978 regarding "fact of" and President Carter asking whether there was a possibility of releasing other imagery. This, he said, was the "kick off" of the task force. It's objective was assumed to be "selected decompartmentation and declassification" but "NOT A WHOLESale DECLASSIFICATION."

[ ] mentioned that Frank Press, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Cyrus Vance and Jimmy Carter were the principals in the discussions of what could be released and Carter's motivation seemed to be:

a. a showing to the American public that his administration "had nothing left over from the Water-gate syndrome;"

b. to declassify might be a way of persuading more Americans to believe in their government.

[ ] expanded on the latter theme with references to the government being "open to some extent" and the American public gaining the impression that the present Administration would not "fake them out."

5. [ ] indicated, however, that Carter emphasized that there must be "a very careful study to determine the benefits" of such a move. [ ] said he saw President Carter's marginal comment on the document which incorporated the proposed study. His words were: "I absolutely agree" (that there shall be no risk to national security or intelligence

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programs). [ ] finished by stating that "the White House" has "no preconceived notion that we declassify" and that any benefits to the Civil sector would be "ancillary." These comments fell like cold water on the civil applications people and it became apparent that the report would most likely not be altered substantially or that the civil agencies would prevail in their recommendations that vast quantities of compartmented imagery would be released.



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